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See story on page 14

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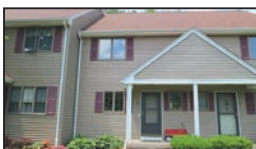
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rocky hill LIFE

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QUOTE OF NOTE:

"I think it's cool to be able to have a say in what goes on." - *Kristina Machaj*

See story page 12

ON THE COVER

Marisol Datiz sings Christian songs as part of a Community Life group fundraiser for Saint Ann's School in Haiti called "Harmonize For Haiti." Funds collected at the concert will go to pay for teachers, to feed the students, maintain the building and to buy office and sports equipment for the students.

Photo by Lisa Brisson
See story page 14

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Special day celebrates special athletes

Rocky Hill Challenger Baseball celebrated its first official Challenger Day June 10 on the new Miracle Field at Elm Ridge Park. Teams from sur-

rounding towns were invited to participate in a jamboree style event. There were two teams from Rocky Hill along with teams from Berlin, Newington/Wethersfield, and Wallingford. The Rocky Hill

Challenger program has grown to 24 players for the 2017 season. More than \$1,400 was raised to support the program, with a grand prize of an adaptive tricycle donated by Rifton Equipment.

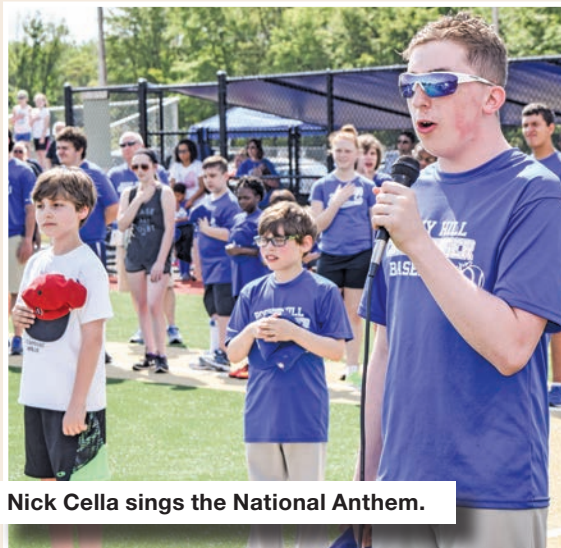


Andrew Sorrentino throws the ceremonial first pitch, assisted by his father and coach Sebby.

Photos by Annie Cerpa



Coach Tom Cosker congratulates softball player Marina Perry, who was named Challenger volunteer of the year.



Nick Cella sings the National Anthem.



Supporters, from left, Marcie Addy, Coach Kim Dillon and Lisa Marotta received bouquets of flowers to thank them for their efforts.



The Rocky Hill Challenger Baseball athletes show off their trophies.



Adam Sorrentino catches the first pitch thrown by his brother Andrew.

Coming together

Catholic churches merge to create a new parish

by Mark Jahne
Editor

Weekend attendance at Roman Catholic churches in Connecticut has been dropping for many years. At the same time, fewer young men are choosing a vocation as a parish priest.

Put those two together and the result was a high level of stress at many of the 212 parishes throughout the Archdiocese of Hartford. After a careful and deliberative pastoral planning process, Archbishop Leonard Blair decided to make dramatic changes.

Twenty-six churches were closed and numerous others were merged to create new parishes. The mergers involved unions of between two and six churches and resulted in the creation of 59 new parishes.

As of June 29, the number of parishes in the archdiocese is now 127. Only 68 of

the former 212 churches remain individual entities as they were before this process began. A total of 186 church buildings are still open throughout the archdiocese.

The two Catholic churches in Rocky Hill, St. Elizabeth Seton and St. James, were combined to form a new parish named St. Josephine Bakhita. But each church keeps its previous name and identity.

Josephine Bakhita was born in Sudan's embattled Darfur region in 1869 and died in 1947. She is considered the patron saint of the victims of slavery and human trafficking, something she personally experienced. She was canonized in 2000 by Pope John Paul II.

Kidnapped at the age of 9, she was sold and resold in the slave markets of El Obeid and Khartoum. She was eventually purchased by Italian Counsel Callisto Legnani and taken to Italy. She lived for a while

The Rev. David Baranowski, left, is leaving St. James Church for a new assignment in South Windsor. The Rev. George Couturier, administrator at the Church of St. Elizabeth Seton, is now the pastor of both Roman Catholic churches in Rocky Hill.



Photo by Mark Jahne

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with the Canossians Sisters, where she came to know God and was baptized into the faith.

Josephine Bakhita served for five decades with the Canossian convent in the town of Schio, performing such services as cooking, embroidery and sewing. People fondly called her "Our Black Mother" or "Mother Moretta." Her feast day is celebrated on Feb. 8.

The Rev. George Couturier, 62, was the administrator of St. Elizabeth Seton for the past year. He now becomes the pastor of both churches. The Rev. David Baranowski, 69, pastor of St. James for the past 11 years, was reassigned to a similar post at a twinned pair of churches in South Windsor.

That leaves Couturier as the only Catholic priest in town. Both men said conversations about merging the two churches started many years ago and well before the pastoral planning process that officially created the new parish.

"We knew this day was coming," Couturier said.

"I think people will just have to

get used to the facts" that church attendance is down and the number of priests is dwindling, Baranowski said.

"There are lots of opportunities for lay ministry. There needs to be a fuller commitment to their church and their parish," he added.

"We really have to invite people to participate and share their gifts," Couturier said.

He prefers to look upon the merger as an opportunity to create a new model parish. St. Elizabeth Seton was exactly that when it was first founded. It started as a mission station, became a missionary church in 1985 and a full parish of the archdiocese in 1989. Early masses were held up the street at the Wiremold factory.

St. James is a more traditional arrangement in which a geographic portion of the town is designated as the home turf of the parish. Not so with its sister church.

"We represent 30 different Zip Codes in this [Elizabeth Seton] church. It was designed that way," Couturier said.

"The new parish is the legal entity, but each of the churches maintains its own name," Baranowski said.

He added that this was the biggest concern of the parishioners at St. James. Maintaining the connection in name to the church where they experienced weddings, funerals, baptisms and confirmations is important not just here, but throughout the archdiocese.

"I think there will be some challenges and some hurt feelings," Couturier added. "If we did nothing, there was no good outcome. Financially, we'll be stronger in the end."

He is confident that the combined talent of the two parish councils, finance councils, religious education staff and volunteers, and other groups will make the new parish a strong and healthy one. He hopes members of both churches will pray a lot, participate and give the new parish a chance.

"We're not going to disrupt any of the traditions," he said. "It's an ongoing process and I'm excited by the potential and the opportunity."

"There is also excitement that something new is happening," Baranowski added. "This is the biggest single movement of priests we've had in many years. This is the first time I've ever had a parochial vicar."

That's the official church term for an assistant pastor. While he looks forward to meeting the Catholics of South Windsor, he also feels sad about leaving Rocky Hill and St. James.

The plan is to offer four masses each weekend, the maximum number one priest is supposed to celebrate. There will be a 4:30 p.m. vigil mass on Saturday and an 11 a.m. Sunday mass at St. James. Mass will be celebrated at 7:30 and 9 a.m. on Sunday at St. Elizabeth Seton.

Couturier said this schedule is subject to change but he wants to try it out and see how things go.

He also said his new parish has hired a strategic planner to help create a plan to operate the two churches as one parish. That planning process will begin in the fall. **RHL**

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LIFE

in the classroom

Teachers of the year Ancona, Demaria, Dubos and Sousa show dedication to education

by Allie Rivera
Staff Writer

As the school year draws to a close, administrators at each of the four public schools in town took the time to recognize the teachers in their buildings who consistently go above and beyond for their students. Each school selected a teacher of the year representing an entire school's worth of hard work and dedication to education.

David Dubos, physical education and health teacher at Rocky Hill High School, has been teaching in the district for 17 years, the last seven at the high school. He is credited with making sweeping changes to the curriculum.

"Dave is responsible for overhauling the entire P.E and health

curriculum," Principal Mario Almeida said. "As district program coordinator, he has implemented new courses and curriculum at all levels that benefit the students both in school and outside of school."

Dubos said the key to his teaching style is in working each day to create a bond with every student he encounters.

"I believe that the student-teacher relationship that you form has a huge impact on your ability to teach, so I think having a clear perspective or understanding of the students, their background, as much information as you can get from them, will give you a greater understanding of where they're coming from and allows you to connect with them," he said.

Almeida said Dubos takes the idea of being student focused to the extreme.

"He is one of the most student-centered teachers I have ever worked with," the principal said. "Every decision he makes is with the thought of what is best for the student."

Dubos finds it important to stress the purpose behind everything his students do. In addition to promoting physical health, he covers the importance of emotional and social health.

"How we care for ourselves emotionally, socially, physically, it dictates everything," he said. "You have to constantly be looking at giving them a bigger picture of what this is all about, what education is

all about."

He helped to create a curriculum that gives students options.

"We've done a great job rewriting curriculum so kids have some choices of what they want to do, which is great, because kids tend to be more motivated when they have some choice," he said.

Dubos has also led the charge in creating the school's Athletic Leadership program as well as helping with the yearly Habitat for Humanity trip, Terrier Tough event, Student Council and UConn Athletic Leadership trips.

"The athletic leadership courses he created are some of the school's most popular electives," Almeida said. "They fill quickly and yet he can't turn a student away. He often

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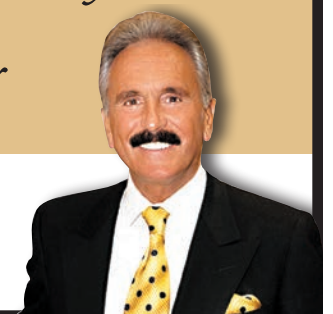
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asks the custodians to bring additional desks into his classroom to accommodate additional students.”

His career is not simply a job and Dubos feels fortunate to be in a district where he is well supported.

“I feel like I live the dream in that I love what I do. I get excited to come in every single day to work,” he said. “When you can do the thing that you’re passionate about in life, there’s not a day that you go to work, and that’s all you could want for your students, too.”

Elizabeth Demaria, music teacher at Griswold Middle School, was similarly praised for her dedication.

“It is truly a pleasure to be the principal where Liz Demaria is a teacher,” Principal Rick Watson said. “She truly dedicates herself to the students of our school and the community.”

A teacher for six years, five in Rocky Hill, Demaria said working with nearly every student in the school allows her to try a wide variety of styles.

“I think you have to teach to the whole student,” she said. “Especially

in music, that means trying different things. We do movement-based music, we do project-based, we do individual. We do a lot.”

“Liz’s innovative and high content lessons motivate and excite all of her students,” Watson said.

“Students with little or no musical experience come to love music class and Miss D. Over her years with us, Liz has already become a favorite with our student body.”

“In sixth grade the kids do composition and we actually make music videos and in seventh grade is piano,” Demaria said. “It is definitely high energy for sure.”

She teaches her eighth grade students about the guitar as well as the history of rock ‘n’ roll, subject matter that is more popular than she had anticipated.

“You wouldn’t think kids would be into the stuff I teach in the eighth grade because it’s from the ‘50s and ‘60s, but they’re so into it,” she said. “The kids are telling me they went home and downloaded ‘Hey Jude.’”

She believes one of the reasons she has been so successful is because

of the efforts she puts into getting to know her students outside of the classroom.

“Since I am a newer teacher, I think you kind of have to establish that comfort and trust level with your students, which I think at the beginning is hard because you have to get them to know who you are,” she said.

“I try to do as many things as I can do to create and foster the relationships with the kids outside of the classroom.”

Demaria has taken on extra responsibilities chaperoning field trips, advising the Unified Sports program, directing talent shows and coaching cheerleaders.

“No job is too large or too small for Liz,” Watson said.

She finds teaching music as a subject both enjoyable and a responsibility. She knows that, for some of her students, it can be the most positive part of their day.

“I try to make it as relatable as I can for the students so they get these authentic experiences in my class,” she said. “Music is a place where

they can really thrive.”

Diane Sousa, a second grade teacher at Stevens School, shares a similar focus on getting her students to thrive.

“I go in every day valuing every child to their full potential and believing that every child can achieve greatness,” she said.

That idea has spread beyond her classroom over the 11 years she has taught at Stevens.

“Within a few moments of entering Room 19, any casual observer can quickly recognize that an incredible atmosphere has been created by an incredible educator,” Principal Jason Maziarz said.

“Mrs. Sousa’s second grade classroom is filled with energy and movement. It is a classroom filled with excitement and engagement. It is a classroom filled with fun, with respect, with care and with love.”

“For me personally, it was just being able to touch a life and to be able to make a difference in a child’s life,” she said.

“I felt like it was a calling to do my best every day to make sure the



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child feels like they're valued and loved and then push them to achieve greatness and to reach their potential."

She strives to create a familial atmosphere in her classroom.

"The concept of family is at the heart of everything that she does," Maziarz said.

"Much like the growth of a family, Diane builds a community in her classroom that teaches her students that they need to care for each other, they need to look after each other, and they need to respect each other as individuals and as part of the team."

"In the beginning, I let the kids know that we're a family and we respect one another like a family," Sousa said.

"We celebrate students' achievements together like a family would, we encourage one another when we're learning something new. It's creating that environment where we know we're all respected and we're there for one another."

By focusing on these aspects, she hopes to have students who

grow not only academically, but as people.

"Diane's unique ability to grow her students as people is as impressive as her ability to grow them as learners," he said. "Her creative, highly engaging lessons along with her thoughtful and well-planned activities provide her second-graders with an enriching learning experience each and every day."

Outside of the classroom, much of her time is taken up by her children, ages 3 and 6.

"It brings everything into full perspective for me," she said. "I know what it's like when the kids go home."

Katie Ancona, a special education teacher at West Hill School, understands the balance between being a teacher and a parent.

"Being a parent and having my own children, when my oldest two children went to school for the first time, it was hard to think about that they were going to be spending all day with someone who I didn't know," Ancona recalled.

"It made me a little more aware

of the parents' experience. I really appreciate the opportunity they have provided me in working with their children."

Ancona has taught special education at West Hill for five years. It's a second career; she had previously worked as a substitute teacher and discovered her passion for special education.

"I just wanted to be more involved in the process of educating students with special needs," she said. "Each student has the potential to engage in, participate in and to experience some success at some level. It's not going to be the same for everybody, but it's possible."

Ancona's dedication to her students has not gone unnoticed by those around her.

"The ultimate team player, Katherine goes above and beyond in her efforts to assure success for all students. She does all this with a smile and a positive attitude that is outright contagious," Principal Scott Nozik said.

"Because of her intellect and the non-threatening manner in which

she conducts herself, staff frequently seek her out for input and guidance, not only with students on her caseload of students, but with any child in our school."

He added Ancona puts in more hours each day than most teachers.

"Mrs. Ancona is frequently among the first to arrive at school and often one of the last to leave the building. Perhaps that is why she is such an integral part of the day-to-day life at West Hill School. She is literally here all day and half of the night," he said.

Being able to work at West Hill is a positive experience for her because of the community of collaborators with whom she works.

"I don't do anything alone here. We have an incredible team. We really work closely together and that really makes all the difference in the world," she said. "It's a great place to be. I definitely felt like the stars were aligned when I landed here."

Nozik said it is Ancona's dedication to her students and commitment to their education that make her stand out among her peers. **RHL**



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COMMUNITY PUBLICATIONS

Students of the month

They are at the top of their class

by Allie Rivera
Staff Writer

As graduation loomed closer, Rocky Hill High School valedictorian Kristina Machaj and salutatorian Emily Louro took time to reflect upon their four years in high school and prepare for what is still to come.

"Even after we leave high school, it's important to remember to be a good person," 18-year-old Emily said. "This phase of our lives may be ending, but we can take what we've learned here with us."

The two graduating seniors said they have learned a great deal during their time at RHHS, not only in the subject areas of English, math and science but in leadership, determination and kindness.

The activities in which they participated and the people with whom they surrounded themselves were the highlights of their high school careers. Kristina, 17, plans to attend the University of Connecticut in the fall to study

actuarial finance.

"I'm interested in the actuarial science part, but I'm also interested in finance, so this really brings those together for me," she said.

Kristina was an active member of the school's swim team for the past two years.

"I started swimming when I was in the first grade," she said.

Though she likes the sport itself, it was her teammates who made the experience so enjoyable.

"Everyone is very accepting of one another and we always do things together," she said. "It's really like a family."

Kristina was also a founding member of the school's newspaper club.

"We would assign stories to people and I would make the final edits," she said. "This year we pushed it all online."

A member of the National Honor Society, she has also served on the Student Council for all four years in high school.

"I used it as an opportunity to be part of the school events," she said. "I think it's cool to be able to have a say in what goes on."

**"I think it's cool to be able to have
a say in what goes on."**

– Kristina Machaj

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Since her freshman year, she has also been part of the Unity Team, a club that transformed over the past four years and merged with the Student Council.

"It's a group that's really all about spreading positivity," Kristina said. "It's changed a lot since I started, but it's still about positivity."

She also stays busy through various volunteer opportunities. Last summer she earned the Presidential Volunteer Service Award for her efforts teaching at her Polish church, volunteering at Atria Greenridge Place and hosting fundraisers for school supplies.

"It's important to me to feel like I'm giving back," she said.

When not involved in her studies, clubs or volunteer work, Kristina works two jobs, tutoring a younger student in Wethersfield and at the Dairy Queen in Cromwell.

As she reflected on her time in Rocky Hill, she always felt supported by her family. A triplet with siblings Julia and Robert, Kristina said she would not have made it this far without their constant support.

"Even when you're doing so many things, it's so important to remember your family," she said. "Don't forget the most important people in your life."

Emily similarly took time to reflect on her high school years before preparing to move away for school in the fall. She plans to attend Marist College to study biomedical science and hopes to some day become a physician's assistant.

"I've always like science, specifically biology, and I've always wanted



Seventeen-year-old Kristina Machaj, left, and 18-year-old Emily Louro graduated as the valedictorian and salutatorian, respectively, from Rocky Hill High School and both said they learned about how to be a good person during their time in the school.

to help people," she said.

Also a member of the National Honor Society, Emily spent her years at RHHS active in a variety of clubs.

Beginning with her sophomore year, she was the only member of the school's gymnastics team, a sport she's been doing her entire life.

"We don't have a team, techni-

cally, so I had to join the Wethersfield team as a team of one," she said.

She practices gymnastics year round at Andy Harvey's Academy of Gymnastics. To add to her repertoire, Emily also joined the school's track team, competing in pole vault.

"I wanted to try it out," she said.

"Because of my gymnastics background, people said I should give it a try. It was fun to do something new."

She served as the president of the Spanish Club, working her way up from vice president her junior year.

"We make presentations, organize the meetings. I recently helped organize a field trip to New York City," she said. "It's really about learning about and celebrating Spanish culture."

Emily is also a member of the Student Council as well as the vice president of her class.

"It's a very large club," she said. "It gives you a chance to have a voice in the events that go on."

She makes time to volunteer with the soup kitchen and food pantry at her church as well as volunteering at the Jefferson House in Newington for the past three summers. Emily works for Boppers Entertainment and Events.

She enjoys spending time with her dog Bentley and seeing her older sister, Alexa, 22. The lessons she most values are those she learned about kindness.

"Helping others is very important to me," she said. "I always try to be optimistic and be a good person."

As the two young women look forward to life outside of Rocky Hill, both said that they are grateful for the lessons they have learned and hope to inspire younger generations of local students to strive for kindness.

"Being kind sparks kindness," Emily said. "It's like a domino effect of being positive." **RHL**

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Conga player Nelson Bello, guitarist David Allan Rivera, vocalist Marisol Datiz and guitarist Vic Rosario entertained the guests at the "Harmonize For Haiti" fundraiser.

Music as motivation

Benefit concert raises funds for Haitian church and school

Photos by Lisa Brisson

by Mark Jahne
Editor

St. Elizabeth Seton Church has a long-running connection with St. Anne Parish in Saintard, Haiti, and its school. The Rocky Hill church sends money and volunteers to the poorest nation in the Western

Hemisphere and its latest contribution is funds raised by a benefit concert.

"Harmonize for Haiti" took place the evening of June 17 featuring the four-piece band Shades of Soul. It consists of David Allen Rivera, Marisol Datiz, Nelson Bello and Vic Rosario.

Rivera's roots are in Puerto Rico

and his guitar playing and percussion reflect his fusion of blues, rock, soul and jazz. He has recorded two CDs including the recent "Sentiment in Color."

The Rocky Hill resident and his wife Datiz perform throughout the United States and beyond. She is a vocalist who spent time at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts in

London and did theatrical performances in her native Puerto Rico.

Bello's percussion blends jazz with Latin rhythms. The New York-based musician studied at the Hartford Conservatory and is currently involved with recording Caribbean sounds.

Rosario is a guitar player, producer, performer and songwriter

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Parishioners Anita Coppa and Mary Blain chat with Father George Couturier prior to the start of the concert.

who has worked with such famous musicians as Tony Bennett, Stevie Wonder, Alicia Keyes, John Legend, B.B. King, Carlos Santana and Lady Gaga.

St. Elizabeth Seton has been supporting St. Anne Parish since 2002. Students at the Haitian school have few books or supplies. They come to school hungry, copy their lessons into small notebooks and study in homes with little, if any, electricity.

St. Elizabeth Seton offers monthly funds to St. Anne. Back in 2013 the Rocky Hill church shared a bequest to help build classrooms so that St. Anne School can serve 400 children in grades K-12.

A hurricane destroyed most of the boats in the fishing community and with it the meager local economy. Free-will funds raised at this concert will go to support the school.

Church members Datiz, Barbara Wysocki and Marianne Hogan organized the benefit performance.

"We went to Haiti in January and we saw the need," Wysocki said.

"We saw the need of the school, especially," Hogan, a retired teacher, added.

Datiz spoke about how the schoolchildren have absolutely nothing and asked them for food. All the women had were a few packages of crackers. When they gave them to the hungry youngsters, rather than wolf them down, the children broke each cracker in half to share with another.

Datiz and Rivera decided to use their musical skills as means to raise money. The other two musi-

cians agreed to give their time and talent to make the show happen.

"They work with me all the time," Rivera said.

"Why don't we bring our art and try to raise funds?" Datiz said. "This is our first effort."

"We try to bring songs that have meaning. It's for the kids, to give back to the community,"

**"We went
to Haiti
in January
and we saw
the need."**

– Barbara Wysocki

Rivera added.

In this case, a community hundreds of miles away.

The concert was supposed to be held outdoors at St. Elizabeth Seton but threatening weather led to the decision to move it inside the parish hall at St. James Church instead.

Their performance was a lively affair with a set list including Latin, pop, rhythm and blues, soul, folk and other songs. Audience members clapped along and at times gave the performers a standing ovation for their efforts.

One member of the audience shared the performance on Facebook live. The musicians at times stretched out the songs into spirited and entertaining jams. **RHL**

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COMMUNITY PUBLICATIONS

Natural wellness is the theme at fair sponsored by Nova Spa

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

Finding natural ways to live well was the theme of “Look Good, Feel Better,” a free event held June 11, at Nova Spa on the Silas Deane Highway. The courtyard next to the day spa and juice bar was full of vendors with products such as honey, maple syrup, clothing and jewelry, while demonstrations included cupping, acupuncture and yoga.

“We’ve always had the vision of offering clients more than they would expect at Nova Spa. About one year ago, we began looking for like-minded practitioners to offer complementary services in addition to our already extensive menu of spa ser-

vices. We met Dr. Nicole Klughers and decided to combine our efforts to achieve our mutual goals,” Jeff Carfi said.

He owns Nova Spa and Squeeze Me Smoothie and Juice Bar, located inside the spa.

Nova Spa uses only organic ingredients in its products and services. Carfi wants to be a resource to the community and has offered a variety of programs such as macrobiotic cooking classes and guided walks.

“We hope to engage, enlighten and encourage people to seek better quality products and services for themselves and their families and achieve a better quality

Dr. Nicole Klughers, right, demonstrates acupuncture on Sarah Pope from Olivemala, a healing jewelry company from Port Jefferson Station, N.Y.



Photos by Mara Dresner

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9:00 a.m. Sunday @ St. Elizabeth Seton
11:00 a.m. @ St. James

New Weekday Schedule as of July 3

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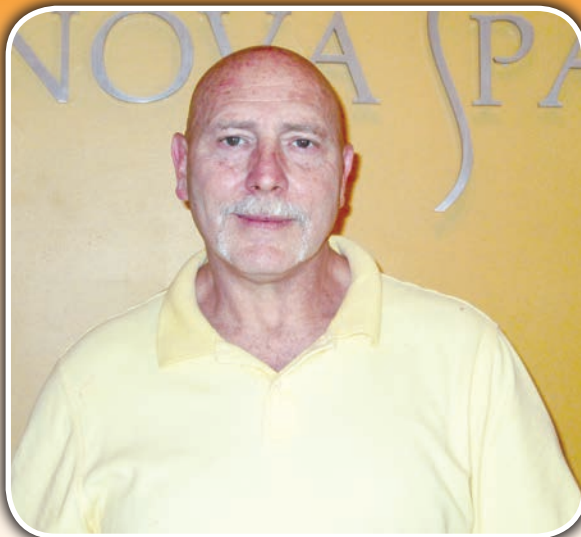
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The Lord has loved me so much:

WE MUST LOVE EVERYONE, we must be compassionate! -St. Josephine Bakhita



Renee MacDonald of Rocky Hill came to the fair in search of healing jewelry and for information about acupuncture, as well as to pick up some honey.



Jeff Carfi, owner of Nova Spa, organized "Look Good, Feel Better" on June 11.



Christine Whitney of Phoenix Farm in Cromwell is all smiles despite the heat.

of life," he said.

Klughers, a naturopathic physician, offers a variety of services including acupuncture and mind-body medicine at her Vis Wellness Center at Nova Spa.

"It's all about wellness and empowering people to care for themselves in every sense," she said. "The body has an amazing ability to heal itself when the proper tools are pro-

vided. That's what we do here is empower people to find those tools in an all-natural way."

Vendors came as far away as New York to participate in the festival. It included live music from Kim Noble, also known as UkeBaby Kim, and a variety of samples. Renee MacDonald of Rocky Hill, already a spa member, came to the event to check out the jewelry and found two

pieces, one for meditation and one for essential oils.

"I wanted to check out acupuncture. I'm thinking of doing it. I haven't done it yet, but plan on it," MacDonald, who was also purchasing organic honey, said. "It's important because I'm more into the natural versus pills and doctors. I go to Dr. Nicole, the naturopathic doctor."

Klughers offered a variety of

activities throughout the day including using the aloe vera leaf for health, traditional Chinese health assessments and hair analysis. Carfi and Klughers opened the event with a morning meditation and closed the day with a gratitude meditation. **RHL**

Nova Spa is located at 1845 Silas Deane Highway. Learn more at novasparockyhill.com.

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News roundup

Henkel fights cancer

A team from Rocky Hill-based Henkel participated in the June 10 Relay for Life at Mill Pond Park in Newington. The relay is an overnight event that remembers those who lost their lives to cancer, celebrates those who survived, and raises funds for American Cancer Society research.

Nursing home aids food bank

Apple Rehab Rocky Hill, in honor of the spirit of National Nursing Home Week, hosted a food drive for the town food pantry. The theme for this year's National Nursing Home Week was "The Spirit of America" and underscores the bond between staff, volunteers and residents that captures the American spirit.

Apple Rehab Rocky Hill kicked off the week with a Mother's Day family brunch. Other events included



Henkel fights cancer

Photo by Mark Jahne

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a Patriotic Day with fireworks, Olympic Day with competitions and games, Pilgrim & Indian Day including a turkey dinner, Western Day featuring a family barbecue and Apple Day.

Play golf for RHHS basketball

The Rocky Hill High School Basketball Boosters will hold their first golf tournament Aug. 19 at Cedar Knob Golf Club in Somers. Faced with increased program costs and reduced high school athletic budgets, the Boosters raise money to help offset the costs to maintain a competitive freshman, JV and varsity program.

Players, sponsors and raffle donations are all needed. Contact President Nick Schiavone at 203-927-2493 or rockyhillhoops@gmail.com or Vice President Matt Donovan at 860-250-4152 or matt@cedar-mtn.com.

The Rocky Hill High School Basketball Boosters is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Knights will play golf, too

The St. James Council 10651, Knights of Columbus, is preparing for its first golf outing Sept. 22 at Timberlin Golf Club in Berlin. The Knights hope this becomes an annual event.



Join the Interact Club

The fee is \$125 per player and tee sponsorships are available starting at \$80. Participants will enjoy 18 holes of golf with a cart, lunch, a roast beef buffet dinner and various prizes.

Contact Mike Lombardo at 860-869-2231 or gottago1969@sbcglobal.net or Mike DiBattisto at mdibattisto@cox.net to register or for additional information.

Join the historical society

The Rocky Hill Historical Society is conducting its annual membership drive. It offers membership levels as

low as \$15 a year, as well as different types, such as lifetime and business. All dues go directly to support the society's mission of protecting, preserving and promoting local history.

With support from its members, the society is able to discover, collect and preserve materials of historical significance. It enjoys sharing information and making its collection accessible to the public. To learn more visit rhhistory.org/membership.

Join the Interact Club

The Rocky Hill High School Interact

Club is recruiting new members for the 2017-2018 academic year. It is sponsored by the Rotary Club of Wethersfield/Rocky Hill. Interact seeks to bring together young people ages 12-18 to develop leadership skills while discovering the power of service above self.

Interact clubs organize at least two projects every year, one that helps their school or community and one that promotes international understanding. Meetings are held twice a month. Contact Jen Madley at jmadley@yahoo.com for additional information. **RHL**

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Serving up smiles

Scoops and Sprinkles ice cream shop opens on Silas Deane

by Allie Rivera
Staff Writer

Shane Aforismo needed a change. That was certain. The extent of that change, however, was unclear. “My previous job for six or seven years was behind a desk,” he said. “I lost my excitement. I needed to be able to do something where I could enjoy going to work and I wanted to make people happy.”

Roughly a year ago, he began considering a career shift, but he was unsure what he wanted to do.

“I thought to myself, do I want to have a suit on all day? Do I want to stay behind a desk?” he said. “Nothing got me excited about what I was doing.”

The choice soon became clear when he discovered that the former Praline’s ice cream shop would soon be for sale.

have the full support of his family.

“I mean, at first I did think he was crazy,” Kim said with a laugh. “But ultimately he needed to do something that would make him happier. I told him that whatever he needed to do, I would support him.”

In early spring, the couple bought the Silas Deane Highway shop and began renovations, repainting the walls, installing new floors, adding new tables, chairs and countertops and outfitting the bathrooms with new equipment. By the middle of May they were prepared to open as Scoops and Sprinkles.

“Scoops and Sprinkles – we wanted to give it a fun name,” Shane said. “It just sounded like it would be a fun place.”

He needed to adjust to running his own business for the first time.

“It’s my first time ever managing people, let alone teenagers,” he said of his staff.

He quickly enlisted the help of his wife as well as his oldest daughter, Hannah, 18, and his two younger children Shane Jr. 7, and Samantha, 5. The youngsters wipe down tables to earn their near-daily ice cream.

“It’s really a family business,” Shane said.

To prepare for their grand opening on May 18, the Aforismos invited their family and friends for a test run the night before.

“That Wednesday was like our own crash course,” Kim said.

Though the place is under new ownership and

“When you come to Scoops and Sprinkles, you’ll always leave with a smile.”

– Shane Aforismo

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has been revamped, Shane kept aspects of the previous business that he felt were working well. For those who are familiar with Praline's, Scoops and Sprinkles will continue to offer the same ice cream with a large variety of flavors.

"Plus we still have the jukebox from the old shop," he said.

In addition to the changes in design, Scoops and Sprinkles now offers ice cream cupcakes and dog treats and will soon begin making their own waffle cones. Shane also set up tables and chairs with oversized umbrellas in front of the building.

"I want it to be a place where people can come sit and relax, not just get ice cream and leave," he said.

"Kids can come and run around. I'm not going to yell at them. That's what I want, a fun place for people to come, hang out, sit outside and be with their family and friends."

He has already found a change in his demeanor and happiness.

"These 12-hour days are tiring, but I'm enjoying myself," he said.

They hope to become further involved in the community, hosting or donating to events at the schools or in town.

"I think being here and being able to do whatever I can for the community, I would love to do it," Shane said.

The couple is excited to provide a place for people in town to spend their time with family and friends and they hope residents will come by to see all of the changes they've made.

"When you come to Scoops and Sprinkles, you'll always leave with a smile," Shane said. "That's why I got into this business – to make people happy." **RHL**

Scoops and Sprinkles is located at 2229 Silas Deane Highway. It can be reached at 860-436-3031 or visit scoopsandsprinklesct.com.



Shane Aforismo and his wife Kim are the owners of the new Scoops and Sprinkles ice cream shop. Pictured clockwise, from left, are Kim Aforismo, employee Austin Chase, 16, Hannah Aforismo, 18, Shane Aforismo, Samantha Aforismo, 5, and Shane Aforismo Jr., 7.

Photos by Allie Rivera

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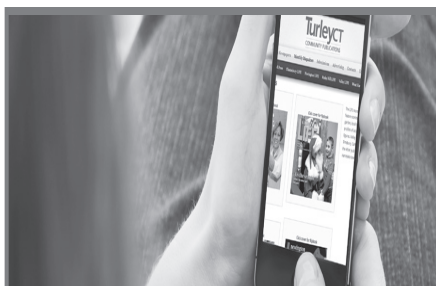
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Slice of LIFE

photos by Mark Jahne



Courtesy photo

The Cora J. Belden Library held its first Cora's Comic-Con June 17. The day was packed with activities for all ages and cardboard cut-outs of comic book characters were displayed throughout the library.

Comic-Con at the library

1. John Riveglia takes a virtual reality trip beneath the ocean. **2.** Matt Ryan of Free Lunch Studios was one of the vendors. **3.** Library staff members all wore matching tie-dye shirts. Some added glitter or other design accents. **4.** Christian Tuttle wore a super hero cape to the festivities. **5.** A Disney sing-along got children up and dancing. **6.** Library Director Mary Hogan greets Captain America. **7.** Christine Kennedy, left, and Doretta Andonucci staffed a table representing the Friends of the Cora J. Belden Library.



People notes

1



1. Dr. Alicia Saunders has joined the staff at Carucci Chiropractic Center on New Britain Avenue. Born and raised in Rocky Hill, she is a graduate of Mercy High School, Eastern Connecticut State University and New York Chiropractic College.

2. Joseph Novellino, 95, was awarded five replacement medals for those he earned while serving in the U.S. Army during World War II. They were stolen 50 years ago when somebody broke into his home while he was on vacation. With him at the June 16 ceremony at Rocky Hill Town Hall are U.S. Sen. Richard Blumenthal and Mayor Claudia Baio.

Tej Patel, Brooke Dunnery, Brianna Hollister and Eric Collins earned high honors and **Andi Duro** earned honors at the University High School of Science and Engineering.

Jacquelin Saucier, a student at the College of Saint Rose, spent an alternative spring break in New Orleans helping to rebuild in the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita. She and 12 other students volunteered in the Lower Ninth Ward, one of the hardest-hit parts of the city, where they helped rehabilitate and build a home in what remains the most devastated neighborhood.

Emily Pentland has received the SUNY-Oneonta Susan Sutton Smith Award for academic excellence.

Kylie Federici, Kate Gibson and Katherine Zepf were named to the dean's list at Emerson College.

Jennifer Carlson, a student at Eastern Connecticut State University, was among a group of students who participated in a global field course to conduct research in the Mojave and Great Basin deserts.

Gabrielle Brzozowski was honored with an Outstanding Senior Service Award at Keene State College. She is majoring in sustainable product design and innovation and is captain of the swim team.

Jacquelin Saucier received the Inez and Nicholas Tarquin Artist Scholar Award from the College of Saint Rose.

Robert Downes, a student at Kingswood Oxford School, was second runner up in the annual Constitution essay competition sponsored by the WALKS Foundation.

Mallory Monaco was one of 90 students selected to present an original academic research project at Assumption College's 23rd Annual Undergraduate Symposium.

The following Rocky Hill residents were honored at Mercy High School: **Madison Bradley**, President's Education Award, Connecticut Association of Schools Award, Jo-Anne Zimmitti Memorial Scholarship; **Eugenia Cho**, Salutatorian, Kiwanis Foundation of Middletown Scholarship, STEM Award, Robotics Team, President's Education Award, Connecticut Association of Schools Award and English Department Award; **Jessica Grodovich**, Valedictorian, Big Y Scholarship, President's Education Award, Connecticut Association of Schools Award and Spanish Department Award; **Lan Lou**, Connecticut Association of Schools Award and Chemistry Award.

Erik Paulson earned a bachelor's degree from Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

Adam Sorrentino was named to the dean's list at Providence College.

Rocky Hill residents **Jessica**

2



Grodovich and Eugenia Cho were valedictorian and salutatorian, respectively, for the Class of 2017 at Mercy High School.

Stephen Lamari graduated summa cum laude from Bentley University with a bachelor of science degree in economics-finance. He was selected for membership in Omicron Delta Epsilon and Beta Gamma Sigma in recognition of high scholastic achievement.

Lee Bouldin earned a master of science degree in manufacturing engineering from Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

Arianna Baret Peralta earned a master of science degree in power systems management from Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

Emily Pentland was named to the dean's list at SUNY-Oneonta.

The following Rocky Hill residents were honored at a recent prize assembly at Kingswood Oxford School: **Skylar Barron**, The Conklin Prize and **Robert Downes**, The Rensselaer Prize.

Lynn Aureli was named to the dean's list at Quinnipiac University.

Kylie Federici earned a bachelor of fine arts degree in cinematography/videography from Emerson College.

Kate Gibson earned a bachelor of fine arts degree in writing, literature and publishing from Emerson College.

Katherine Zepf earned a bachelor of arts degree in writing, literature and publishing from Emerson College.

Alexia Gooden earned a bachelor of science degree in public health from American International College.

Isabella Garzone received the Excellence in Health Science Award at the College of Arts and Sciences Awards Ceremony at Western New England University.

Kylie Federici, Katherine Zepf and Kate Gibson were named to the dean's list at Emerson College.

Alexander Ratti was named to the president's list at Coastal Carolina University.

Kara Bates was named to the dean's list at the University of Vermont.

Margaret Begen was named to the dean's list at Endicott College.

Louisa Acca and August Corell were named to the dean's list at Emmanuel College.

Dale Reese was named to the dean's list with high distinction at Grove City College.

Skylar Barron, Sarah Cioffi, Caroline Dawson, Robert Downes, Jordan Korn, Karishma Lawrence, Nicholas Miano, Alyssa Pilecki, Hannah Rowland and Matthew Safalow were named to the dean's list at Kingswood Oxford School. **RHL**

Real Estate

BRAND NEW APARTMENTS HOMES AVAILABLE AT THE OLD TALCOTT MILL APARTMENTS IN VERNON, CT

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Historic Talcott Mill, LLC, through its Managing Agent DeMarco Management Corporation, is pleased to announce the new housing opportunity available at Old Talcott Mill. Applications are now being accepted and the property is anticipated to be ready for occupancy in June 2017. Old Talcott Mill is a Workforce Development Housing Community located at 47 Main Street in Vernon, CT within the Talcott Historic District in Vernon, CT. The rehabilitation of Talcott Brothers' Mill offers eighty three (83) residential units. Units will be offered to individuals and families having an annual household income at and not exceeding 60% of the HUD AMI for Tolland County. Income Limit Restrictions Apply. Applications are available at DeMarco Management Corporation in person at 117 Murphy Road in Hartford, CT; by phone (860) 951-9411; by contacting the ATT Relay number 711 or via email at info@talcottmill.com. Applications will not be available at the Property.

The residential space includes a mix of differently sized studio, one bedroom, and two bedroom apartments with rents starting at \$886 - \$1122 with heat and hot water included in the rents. The property offers spacious unique floor plans, fully-applianced kitchens, on-site laundry facilities, fitness room, central air, accessible units, community room and Historic Mill Exhibition.

This development is financed through the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA), receives state grant funds from the Department of Housing (DOH), with State and Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits. Income Restrictions Apply.



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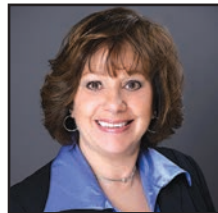


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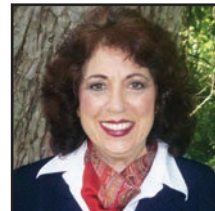
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July calendar

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

3 Google Computer Science First – Game Design, 3 p.m., Cora J. Belden Library, 33 Church St., 860-258-7623 or rockyhillct.gov/library, also July 10, 17, 24 and 31

Pokémon League, 4 p.m., for grades 2-8, Cora J. Belden Library, also July 12, 19 and 26

5 Playgroup Plus, 10:15 a.m., Cora J. Belden Library, also July 12, 19 and 26

Book Buddies, 12:30 p.m., for grades 3 and above, registration required, Cora J. Belden Library, also July 12, 19 and 26

Mini Makers – LEGO Style, 3 p.m., for grades K-3, registration required, Cora J. Belden Library, also July 12 and 29

Maker Camp – Paper Circuits, 3 p.m., for grades 4-8, Cora J. Belden Library

Adult Coloring, 6 p.m., Cora J. Belden Library, also July 12, 19 and 26

Mystery Book Discussion, 6:30 p.m., Cora J. Belden Library

6 La Leche League, 10 a.m. to noon, 23 Textbook Ave., 860-529-2307 or mgubala@sbcglobal.net

English as a Second Language, 10:30 a.m., Cora J. Belden Library, also July 13, 20 and 27

Finch Robotics Program, 2 p.m., for grades K-5, Cora J. Belden Library, also July 13, 20 and 27

Cora Creates Summer Crafter Camp, 3 p.m., for ages 7 and older, registration required, Cora J. Belden Library

7 Art Start, 10:30 a.m., for ages 2 and older, registration required, Cora J. Belden Library

Wii U Gaming Tournament, 10:30 a.m., for grades K-12, registration required, Cora J. Belden Library, also July 14, 21 and 28

8 Alzheimer's or Dementia Caregivers Support Group, 10 a.m., registration required, The Atrium at Rocky Hill, 160 Elm St., 860-563-5588 or kpernerewski@benchmarkquality.com

10 Preschool Music and Play, noon, for ages birth to 5 accompanied by an adult, Cora J. Belden Library, also July 17 and 24

Builder Noon, 4:15 p.m., for ages 4-8, registration required, Cora J. Belden Library, also July 17, 24 and 31

Google Computer Science Workshop – Music and Sound, 5 p.m., for grades 3-5, registration required, Cora J. Belden Library, also July 17, 24 and 31

Music and Movement, 6:15 p.m., for ages birth to 5, registration required, Cora J. Belden Library, also July 24

11 Career One-on-One, 10 a.m., registration required, Cora J. Belden Library, also July 25

Fun for Ones, 10:15 a.m., for ages 1-2, registration required, Cora J. Belden Library, also July 18 and 25

Knitting Group, 11 a.m., Cora J.

Belden Library, also July 18 and 25

Google Computer Science Workshop – Sports, 4 p.m., registration required, Cora J. Belden Library, also July 18 and 25

Polish Culture Night, 6:30 p.m., registration requested, Cora J. Belden Library

CT Hearing Voices Network support group, 7 p.m., Rocky Hill Congregational Church, 805-817 Old Main St., second floor classroom, 203-391-4968, also July 18 and 25

12 Maker Camp – Balloon Rocket Cars, 3 p.m., for grades 4-8, Cora J. Belden Library

Alzheimer's or Dementia Caregivers Support Group, 5 p.m., The Atrium at Rocky Hill, 1160 Elm St., registration required, 860-563-5588 or kpernerewski@benchmarkquality.com

Kids Get Cooking, 6:15 p.m., for grades K-2, registration required, Cora J. Belden Library

13 Toddler Time, 10:15 a.m., for ages 2-3, registration required, Cora J. Belden Library, also July 20 and 27

17 SCORE Small Business Counseling, noon, registration required, Cora J. Belden Library

Families READ, 6:15 p.m., for grades K-3, Cora J. Belden Library, also July 19 and 31

18 Pokémon Go Safari, 3 p.m., Cora J. Belden Library

Solar Eclipse Talk, 6:30 p.m., registration required, Cora J. Belden Library

19 Maker Camp – PVC Rocket Launchers, 3 p.m., for grades 4-8, Cora J. Belden Library

20 Cora Creates – Summer Crafter Camp Series, 3 p.m., for ages 7 and older, registration required, Cora J. Belden Library

21 LEGO Free Play, 10:30 a.m., for ages 2 and older with an adult, Cora J. Belden Library

25 Health and Wellness with Dr. Klughers, 6:30 p.m., registration requested, Cora J. Belden Library

Maker Camp – Brushbots, 3 p.m., for grades 4-8, Cora J. Belden Library

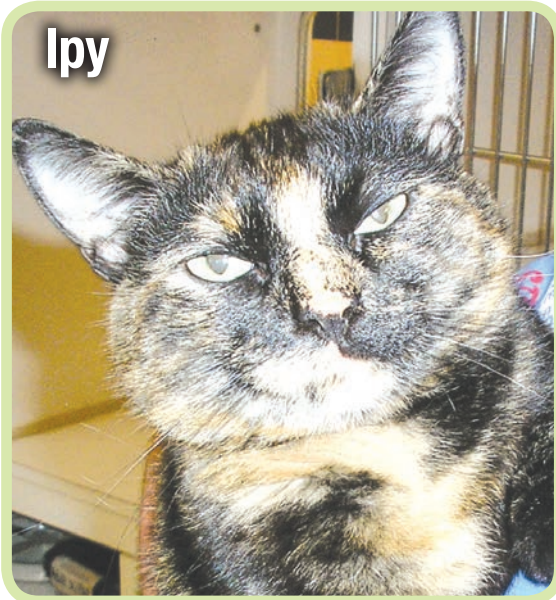
Preschool Music & Play, 6:15 p.m., for ages birth to 5, Cora J. Belden Library

Roots of Rock 'n' Roll with Brian Gillie, 6:30 p.m., registration required, Rocky Hill Community Center, 860-258-7623

Is your club, community organization, school or house of worship holding an event open to the general public? If so, please send us the details for inclusion in our calendar. Email your events to Mark Jahne at mjahne@turleyct.com or mail them to Turley CT Community Publications, 540 Hopmeadow St., Simsbury, CT 06070.

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Ipy

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Chino is a 4-year-old neutered male pit bull who is looking to live in a single-family home, condominium or apartment. Children should be 12 or older. He has no prior experience with other animals but is willing to give it a try. Chino has lots of energy and needs to get exercise every day. He has a great deal of potential and would do best with a family that has prior experience with high-energy dogs.

Inquiries about adoption may be made at the Connecticut Humane Society, 701 Russell Road, Newington. Call 860-594-4500. More information, including videos, can be found online at cthumane.org. Click on "Adopt" and "Newington." The Connecticut Humane Society is a private organization and has no time limits for adoption.



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Bite by bite

Eating mindfully is about more than
what goes into your mouth

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

Do you ever find yourself looking at an empty pint of ice cream or candy wrapper and wondering just where it all went? In our technologically connected, go-go-go world, it can be challenging to slow down enough to really experience what we're eating.

Mindfulness guru Jon Kabat-Zinn, founder of the Stress Reduction Clinic at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center, has an exercise where he has students eat a single raisin, a process that can take several minutes.

"I love Jon Kabat-Zinn's definition on mindfulness, 'Bringing awareness to the present moment without judgment.' I find it can be most helpful to utilize our five senses to do this. In today's society teeming with technology, mindfulness is more important than ever. When we are mindful, we have a much better chance of determining what we need. This is so important with mindful eating. So many folks start tearing open their large family-size bags of chips or cookies and begin the mindless pursuit of shoveling one chip or cookie into their mouths

with little recognition of this behavior. Only when the bag is empty, do they realize what they have done," Theresa Nygren, LCSW of The Mindful Self-Compassionate Way in Farmington, said.

"Mindful eating is a wonderful practice to notice the hunger and then determine what the body really craves. During mindful eating, attention is paid to the taste, texture and colors of food. Eating mindfully naturally allows the body to sense when it has had enough, which can help reduce the amount consumed. In our previous groups, participants are always surprised that when eating mindfully, they even tend to leave something on their plate. They have a much easier time determining when they have reached a comfortable place of fullness and can push away from the table before becoming

overly stuffed."

It's also about being conscious of what it took to get the food to your plate.

"Before eating begins, bring recognition to all of the hands that were involved in getting this food to your plate. These include the growers, truckers, supermarket folks, etc.," Nygren noted.

Mindful eating doesn't have to be a formal program. It can simply be a more conscious way to look at food.

"Mindfulness is being present in the moment and fully aware of what you are doing and why. Mindful eating is the basis of a healthy relationship with food. It is paying attention to not only what you are eating, but how much, how fast and why. It is fully enjoying the tastes and smells of the food, and eating to nourish the

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body. When beginning to eat more mindfully, one must slow down and make eating an activity separate from all others. Mindful eating is eating when you are truly hungry, not stressed, upset or bored, and stopping when you are satisfied, not stuffed or sick,” Jacqui Campbell, MS, RD, CDN, of Bordeaux Nutrition LLC in Newington, explained.

“Mindless eating is what happens when we are rushed and eating on the go, or when we sit down in front of the TV after a stressful day. This often leads to making poor food choices, overeating and the myriad of health effects that come with those choices,” Jackie Stevenson, DTR, also of Bordeaux Nutrition, added.

“Mindful eating is focusing on the food and enjoying it, chewing slowly, pausing in between bites, and listening to your body to fullness cues and how specific foods make you feel. Eating more mindfully can bring more joy to this daily activity, and, by listening to your

body, will help you naturally maintain a proper weight and improved health.”

Truly eating mindfully can be a challenge, so you may want to start incrementally.

“Start with something small like a snack or cup of coffee. Try not to be reading the paper when you’re doing that to see how different it feels. What we’re trying to do is slow people down,” Sharon Gutterman, Ph.D., of Mindful Wow! in West Hartford said. “Other things that help people slow down are to put your fork down between bites or to try eating a meal with chopsticks. Slowing down helps us with savoring and, when we begin this, we can pay attention to when we really are full. Otherwise, it’s as if we haven’t eaten.”

Eating with your non-dominant hand is another technique to try.

“When we eat really in the present moment – you can’t eat in the past, you can’t eat in the future – all the senses can be engaged right now in this present moment. You can’t do

this every single time with every single thing we eat,” Gutterman said. “It’s helpful to be aware, smelling our food, tasting our food, hearing the crunch of the food, savoring the flavors. Having gratitude for this food and how it came to us, for the sunshine and the rain, the growers and the truckers, the package designers, the food, to me then becomes elevated from an ordinary experience to something quite extraordinary.”

Nygren noted that the process of eating mindfully begins before you even sit down for a meal.

“In order to experiment with eating more mindfully, it is probably best to select one meal a day to practice this new behavior, perhaps selecting a meal where there is a bit more time to slow things down. Before meal time begins, it can help to notice on a scale of one to 10 of how hungry you are. Is it the clock that signals it is time to eat? Or is it your stomach that is growling with the beginning signal of needing some fuel for your body? If you are

eating according to clock time and can put off eating until true hunger shows up, give more time for your body to guide you.

“Our bodies hold the wisdom, but we as a society are often so disconnected from the messages while at the same time having an inner dialogue attacking our bodies in some ways. The litany goes like this, ‘How did I ever get so fat? I hate my belly. My thighs are enormous. My stomach is disgusting.’ You get the picture. Befriending our bodies is so important in this process of becoming more mindful,” she said.

“So, once you are tending to true hunger, arrange a plate with a colorful array of whole foods. Then notice how your food looks. As you take your first bite, really enjoy the burst of flavors as you slowly chew this mouthful of food. Is it salty, sweet, sour?

“Placing the fork down between bites can help facilitate this mindful practice. Perhaps while your fork rests on the table, it would be a good



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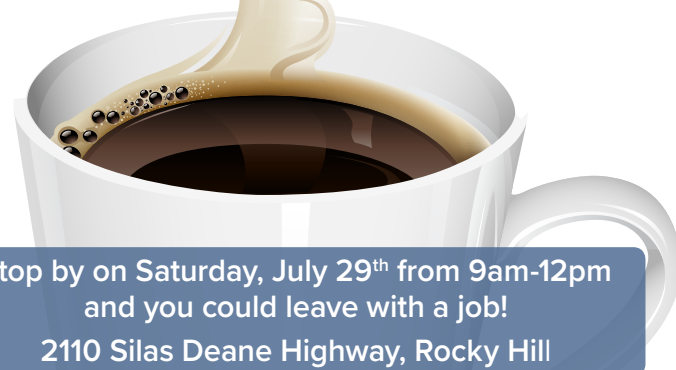


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“Eating more mindfully can bring more joy to this daily activity, and by listening to your body will help you naturally maintain a proper weight and improved health.”

– Jackie Stevenson



time for a deep belly breath,” she continued. “As you consume your meal, keep checking in with your belly regularly to see if it is signaling it has had enough. Can you pause when you get this signal? So many Americans just keep on eating until their plates are clean as a whistle. Let your stomach be your guide. Eating in this fashion can aid digestion, release weight and increase a positive frame of mind.”

And mindfulness – and its benefits – reach far beyond the dining room table.

“Living mindfully to me is about being as aware as I can to what’s going on within and around me. As an example, this morning when I was walking, I spontaneously began to say to myself, ‘Right now, I feel the sun on my head. I feel this cold breeze. I can tell my legs know how to walk and

I am grateful for that.

“My haircut feels so good. Am I satisfied? And that’s huge for me to ask. Right now I am smiling.’ It’s coming back to what my senses and thoughts and feelings are telling me right now,” Gutterman explained.

She noted that many people live in the future, worrying about the “what if.” Others ruminate about the past, focusing on the “if only.”

She said that living mindfully helps us be cognizant of those patterns.

“When I’m aware I’m somewhere not wholesome or healthy or doing me much good,” she said, “I just remind myself what I have is breathing moment to moment.” **TBM**

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Did you know?



According to the National Osteoporosis Foundation, certain factors make women more likely than men to develop osteoporosis, a bone disease that occurs when the body loses too much bone, produces too little bone or both.

One such factor is that women tend to have smaller, thinner bones than men. Another reason women are more vulnerable to osteoporosis than men concerns the hormone estrogen. Estrogen is a hormone in women that serves many functions,

one of which includes protecting bones. Production of estrogen decreases sharply when women reach menopause, the period in a woman’s life when she ceases menstruating.

The National Institute on Aging notes that the average woman has her final period at age 51. Once women reach menopause, the accompanying decline in estrogen production can cause bone loss.

This is one reason why women’s risk for osteoporosis increases after menopause and why recommended intake of calcium and vitamin D, both of which can help women prevent osteoporosis, is different for women age 50 and below than it is for women age 51 and older.



Music may have the ability to soothe, heal and inspire physical activity.

How music may improve health

Plato said, “Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything.” Music often communicates messages that are not easily expressed, which is one reason why music is such an integral part of so many people’s lives.

While many people love music for its entertainment value, there is growing evidence that music can be good for overall health as well. A study from researchers at the Cleveland Clinic focused on the use of music for brain surgery patients who must be awake during their pro-

cedures. Researchers found that music enabled the patients to manage anxiety, reduce pain and relax more fully during their procedures.

In a study titled, “The effect of music intervention in stress response to cardiac surgery in a randomized clinical trial,” a team of Swedish researchers measured serum cortisol, heart rate, respiratory rate, mean arterial pressure, arterial oxygen tension, arterial oxygen saturation, and subjective pain and anxiety levels for patients who had undergone cardiothoracic surgery.

Those who were allowed to listen to music during recuperation and bed rest had lower cortisol levels than those who rested without music.

Many doctors now play music while operating or enable patients to listen to music to calm their nerves during in-office procedures.

According to Caring Voice Coalition, an organization dedicated to improving the lives of patients with chronic illnesses, music has also been shown to enhance memory and stimulate both sides of the brain, which may help individuals recover from stroke or those suffering from cognitive impairments.

Music also can have a positive impact on mood.

Neuroscientists have discovered that listening to music heightens positive emotions through the reward centers of the brain.

Music stimulates the production of dopamine, creating positive feelings as a result.

Some researchers think that music may help improve immune response, promoting faster recovery from illness. Undergraduate students at Wilkes University measured the levels of IgA — an important anti-

body for the immune system’s first line of defense against disease — from saliva. Levels were measured before and after 30 minutes of exposure to various sounds, including music. Soothing music produced significantly greater increases in IgA than any of the other conditions.

Another way music has been linked to improved health is its ability to make physical activity seem less mundane.

Listening to songs can distract one from the task at hand, pushing focus onto the music rather than the hard work being done. When exercising, upbeat music can help a person go a little further as they work to achieve their fitness goals than working out without music.

The benefits of music extend beyond enjoying a favorite song, as music can do much to contribute to one’s overall health. **TBM**



Healthy in a minute

Quick tips for living strong

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

Sometimes it can seem hard to maintain a healthy lifestyle. You're busy. You're saturated with so much information, much of it conflicting. Who has the time to schedule in one more thing?

Well, you do! Believe it or not, there are quick and easy steps you can take to improve your health – and you can start right now in as little as one minute. Let's get started:

Stand up

If you're one of the many people who spend their entire workday sitting in front of a computer, here's an easy to-do. According to Jennifer Garza, ScD., ergonomist for UConn Health, taking even one minute per hour to stand up, stretch, move or walk may be beneficial for your health.

"Prolonged sitting is linked to increased risk for disease and death. And, recent studies estimate that physical inactivity contributes to more than 300,000 deaths annually in the United States," she said.

"There is some good news, though. Evidence suggests that alternating between sitting, standing and moving throughout the day may reduce back pain and promote better cholesterol levels and glucose regulation. It may even help you to become more productive."

It really is that simple. While some people opt to use a sit-stand workstation while working on computer-related tasks, Garza cautions

against completely replacing sitting with standing.

"Too much standing, which has been associated with pain, fatigue and chronic venous insufficiency, can be just as harmful as too much sitting," she noted.

Rather, try to incorporate movement throughout your day.

"You may consider walking to a printer or bathroom farther away than the ones you normally use; talking with a colleague in person instead of sending an email or text; taking the stairs instead of the elevator; holding walking meetings; or starting a group stretching or exercise class," she suggested.

And more is definitely better. (You knew that.)

"If possible, try to incorporate at least three to five minutes of movement into every hour," Garza said. "However, even one minute less sitting per hour can help you to feel healthier, more comfortable and more productive."

And don't think that movement during the day is your free pass for binge watching in the evening.

"It is definitely worthwhile to keep the same principles in mind when using the computer, watching TV, or doing other sedentary activities during leisure time," Garza noted.

While watching TV, use the built-in timer – commercials – as your cue to get up and move.

Exercise

You knew this would be on the list. What might surprise you is that it doesn't take hours in the gym to have a positive impact.

Dr. Randall J. Risinger of Hartford Orthopedic Surgeons PC, which has an Urgent Care Walk-in Center in Avon, suggests stretching every day.

"Hamstring flexibility/stretching is critical to prevent and relieve low back pain and knee pain. It is also one of the best stretches to prevent sports-related lower extremity

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injuries. Stretching your hamstrings a few minutes a day is a great investment," Risinger said. "Stretching your pectoralis muscles helps posture and, more importantly, can help prevent future shoulder problems," such as rotator cuff repair.

Dr. Alexa Veeder, a chiropractic physician and co-owner of Back to Motion in Newington, noted that even short workouts can pay big dividends.

She has created a quick lower body workout that can be done anywhere. It takes just 10 minutes, or can be done multiple times for a more complete workout.

"These workouts are good for anyone for a few reasons. It targets areas of the body that are important [in] everyday life. It is important to keep full-body workouts incorporated to keep individuals more active and overall strength [goals are] met. Those who do not incorporate full-body functional workouts are at a higher risk to become injured at activities that they like to do as hob-

bies due to lack of mobility and flexibility," she explained. "Balance is key for injury prevention such as ankle, knee and even low back injuries. By using these exercises on a regular basis, this can improve muscles around the ankles and other important lower body areas to help aid in stability of legs that one may not have developed without proper training."

Veeder, who is a marathoner, certified personal trainer and marathon coach, said that runners will find special benefits when they add in cross-training to their routines.

"Cross-training with strength workouts is necessary to see results for speed. Once you begin to build up core, glutes and accessory muscle strength, you will have a stronger momentum of the primary running muscles which, in turn, will improve overall running time," Veeder noted. "Cross-training accessory muscles is a must to improve speed and will propel you forward."

For training for an event such as a marathon, she recommends run-

ning three or four times per week with two or three cross-training strength sessions.

"Listen to your body and know when a rest day is needed," she advised.

Options for full functional body workouts include kettle bells and resistance bands, or simply using your body weight, such as in Veeder's workout below.

Whether you're a runner trying to improve your next race time or just want to be a little faster chasing

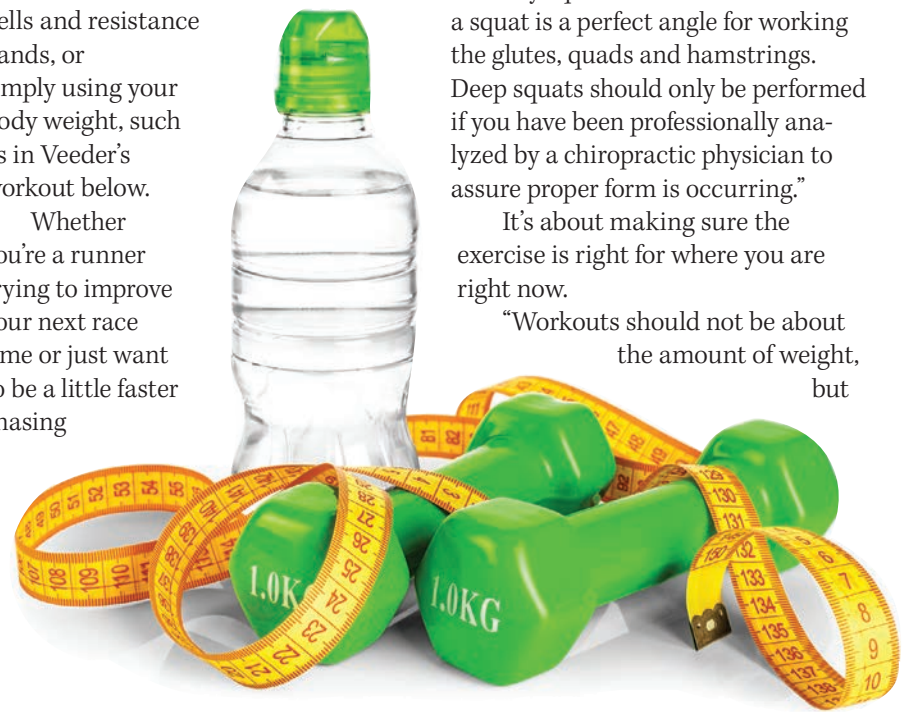
your kids around the yard, Veeder has a few suggestions for success.

"While performing a squat exercise, make sure to keep upper body squared, shoulders back, and the bending should be from the hips as the back remains erect," she said.

"For any squat workout, 45° to 55° in a squat is a perfect angle for working the glutes, quads and hamstrings. Deep squats should only be performed if you have been professionally analyzed by a chiropractic physician to assure proper form is occurring."

It's about making sure the exercise is right for where you are right now.

"Workouts should not be about the amount of weight, but



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about the duration and the importance of proper form in order to activate and fatigue your muscles safely and successfully after 60 seconds," Veeder added.

Here is Veeder's 10-minute Total Transformation Squat Workout:

Warm up with butt kick runs in place (four rounds of 60 seconds): 4 minutes

Squat with elbows bent at 90° angle (add weights to increase difficulty): 60 seconds

Plank position while maintaining hips parallel to the floor: 60 seconds

Push-ups (modify on the knees if needed): 60 seconds

Single leg isometric squat (45°-55°) alternating legs (add weights to increase the challenge): 30 seconds each side

Plank position with alternating knees into chest (keeping a flat back): 60 seconds

Walking lunges, forwards and backwards (add weights to increase difficulty): 60 seconds

Wall sits (hold a weight to increase difficulty).

Tip: Make sure your legs are at a 90-degree angle to properly work your quads: 60 seconds.

Have a little extra time? Repeat the entire circuit (sans warmup) three



more times; it will take you just over half an hour.

Read to your child

This is an easy action step with benefits for both parent and child.

"If you are the parent of an infant, toddler, preschool or early-school-aged child, you have likely questioned the best way to maximize your child's developmental potential. We live in a world that pushes parents to 'not miss out' on the important window of brain development that occurs in the early childhood years.

"We are bombarded with ads that promote the use of certain products – whether they are vitamins, nutritional supplements, educational games or technology-based learning tools – to ensure we give our children the best chance to succeed in life.

Many of these products are expensive, and the number of choices can be overwhelming and stress-inducing for parents. The good news is that with just 20 minutes a day and a trip to your bookshelf or local library you can improve your child's language skills, enhance their brain activity, develop a stronger parent-child relationship and reduce your own stress," Dr. Joy Hong, Prohealth Physicians, Somerset Pediatrics in Glastonbury, said.

Hong said that medical studies have shown that children who are read to at home have more activity in the brain areas that support understanding language and visual imagery. The research is promising for parents, too.

"Parents will also benefit as research done at the University of Sussex shows that reading reduces stress levels by more than two thirds within just six minutes," Hong said, noting an article published in The Telegraph, a British publication.

She said the process starts before you even pick up a book.

"Put away your cell phone! Turn it off, or put it in another room. Turn off the TV. Let your child see you do these things. Undivided parental attention is the most valuable gift you

can give your child," she noted.

Next, pick a story that you know your child likes.

"Children thrive on routine. Reading a familiar book is a great way to create a sense of comfort in an increasingly stressful world. Offer a new book or two, but always keep some of the old favorites available. Allow your child to choose the books and the order in which they will be read," Hong recommended.

"Let your child set the pace. Babies and young toddlers may be more interested in eating the book than reading it. That's OK. Preschool age children may jump up and run around in the middle of the book. This is normal. Tracking the words on the page with your finger, pointing at pictures and making funny sound effects are all ways to enhance the reading experience."

Hong recommends carrying the experience of reading beyond the page.

"Talk with your child about things that you have read. Make connections between books and things they see in the world around them," she said. "Nurturing a love of reading is a lifetime gift you can give your child – and it only takes 20 minutes a day." **TBM**

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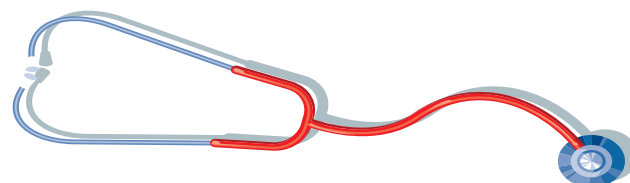


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Feeling overwhelmed?

How to find a good fit for help

by **Alicia B. Smith**
Associate Editor

Change can be exciting and exhilarating, or draining and overwhelming. It is often a change in circumstances that leads an individual to seek ways to adjust and move forward. Sometimes the help of a therapist is needed.

But how? That, too, can be overwhelming, but it does not have to be.

"The most common diagnosis I use in my practice is what is called adjustment disorder diagnosis," Mitch Page, LCSW of Newington, said, adding that while anxiety and depression may be involved what his patients are often struggling with is a life change. This could be a loss of a job, having a baby, losing a spouse, or even

adjusting to retirement.

"There is a small number who have truly biological-based illnesses," he said. "It does not mean you are crazy. That is such a terrible term, but even those are triggered by life stressors or life adjustments."

To begin, consider your goal. What do you hope therapy will do for you?

"Once you have a clear sense of that,



Did you know?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, regular physical activity is one of the most important things older adults can do to promote their long-term health.

The CDC recommends that men and women age 65 or older who are generally fit and have no limiting health conditions need at least two hours and 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity, such as brisk walking, each week. In addition, such people should perform strength-training activities that work all major muscle groups at least two days per week.

While many fit older men and women with no preexisting health conditions are capable of these activities, those able to push themselves a little further can opt for 75 minutes per week of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity, such as jogging or running, combined with the same strength-training regimen.

A combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity aerobic activity coupled with strength training may also provide adequate physical activity for aging men and women.

Before beginning a new exercise regimen, men and women should consult with their physicians to discuss any limitations they may have and how to manage those risks while still being physically active.

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that can guide you to the help you can get,” Page said.

When in the midst of an overwhelming life event, it can be difficult to think clearly. However, it could be beneficial to take a deep breath and find help.

“Facing a major life transition or other life issue that the person might benefit from having an objective professional third party’s help with” is the best way to know when therapy might be a good option, Elliott Strick, LMFT of West Hartford said.

“These might include loss of a job, ending of a relationship/marriage, death of someone close, assistance with recovery from addiction, all of which might lead to feelings of depression or anxiety that don’t get resolved easily or in a reasonable amount of time,” Strick said. In other words, it could be, he said, “an emotional problem that is adversely affecting the quality of one’s life.”

Strick has counseled individuals and couples who are wrestling with infidelity issues, communication within a relationship, the ending of a relationship, those overcoming pain resulting from trauma in the past, or anxiety and depression.

Finding a good fit with a therapist could lead to positive outcomes. However, there are some questions a patient might want to think about before choosing.

Page suggested thinking about whether you would feel most comfortable with a male or female practitioner, or one who specializes in a particular area such as transgender or LGBTQ issues.

“Another consideration, obviously, is finances,” Page said. Those who have insurance through their employer may cover the deductibles for a therapist and, in other instances, the provider has a contract with a insurance agency to charge a specific amount.

“I am ethically obligated to charge the contracted fee,” Page said.

In addition to questions about finances, gender and location, Strick suggests that patients also discuss the therapist’s experience with relevant issues. Once these questions have been thought over, the next step would be to consider how to best approach therapy. Would seeing someone one on one in an office environment be preferable? Or, it might be best to seek a group practice with an MD on staff in the event the medications need to be pre-

scribed. There are also clinical options available and practices specializing in a specific area, such as women’s or geriatric issues.

Resources to find a therapist include an individual’s own doctor. Page explained that men tend to ask their primary care physician for a referral, while women often ask their OBGYN. Either way, a trusted professional can often make an appropriate suggestion.

In addition, Page said the 2-1-1 Infoline can be helpful.

“They are trained clinicians, not licensed health professionals. They can help you sort through what type of help you need,” Page said, adding that they can use a zip code or the name of a town in order to find a nearby therapist.

If possible, Strick suggested interviewing, in person, more than one therapist before making a choice. Additionally, one can ask friends and family members or a primary care

doctor. Online profiles on psychotherapy sites can offer some leads. Websites such as goodtherapy.org, psychologytoday.com or therapistlocator.net are good places to start, according to Strick.

Once an appointment is made, Page said patients can expect to discuss in the first session or two what he referred to as a “contract,” often in the form of a series of questions: How can I help you? What are you working on? How will you know if I have been helpful? What will be different after three sessions, after eight sessions? In some instances the therapist and patient may have a more formal contract that is signed, otherwise it is a verbal contract so both have a clear understanding of what the goals are for the patient. The goal could be anything from feeling more hopeful, having more energy, or not arguing with your spouse as much.

“You will know after two or three [sessions] if one, you are making prog-

ress toward your goal and, two, separate from the goals, you want to make sure the fit is right,” Page said.

Ed Federici, LMFT, based in Wethersfield refers to this as fantasy.

“What is the fantasy of what the therapy is going to do for me?” he said.

“I am looking to receive something” from patients Federici said. “That is one of the first questions I ask clients.”

From there Federici is interested in finding out what brought the patient in – what they are hoping to get out of therapy.

Additionally, Federici encourages patients to ask themselves questions. Among them are, “What is my hope if therapy goes well? What am I feeling like inside? What are the externals that are different in my life because of therapy?” he said.

Federici recommends patients come in for at least four sessions in order to determine whether or not things are moving in the direction they had hoped.

“Clients come in with their defenses up. That’s good, but sometimes we shield the therapy throughout that defense mechanism,” Federici said.

“If you still have that same feeling at the third session, then maybe its time, we might not mesh well. I take no offense. This is not working out. I have lots of good colleagues I can refer you to,” Federici said.

“I think in the beginning people come in and they are very vulnerable,” he said, adding that a patient may also come in feeling very confident.

“Whatever they present, I want to make sure that I am creating a safe place so they can seek the truth,” Federici said. “I want to create safety and then after that I want to be able to help them find and access their strength and create that life they wanted or discover the life they want to create; help them find their strength.”

Ultimately, seeking help should not make one feel ashamed or embarrassed. “We all go through challenges in life; we feel alone,” Page said. “No one should feel shame or embarrassment to meet with someone if they need help or are in trouble.”

“We think mental health care is underutilized by the thousands across this country. It’s evident in the suicide rate across the country,” Page said.

“Get help. It’s out there. Everyone needs help once in awhile.” **TBM**

**“Whatever they present,
I want to make sure that I am
creating a safe place so they can seek
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then after that I want to be able
to help them find and access their
strength and create that life they
wanted or discover the life they
want to create.”**

– Ed Federici

The Best Medicine



The evolving world of Alzheimer's

Alzheimer's disease is one of the most prevalent types of dementia in the world, affecting an estimated 35.6 million people all over the globe, and that number is expected to double in 20 years.

The Alzheimer's Foundation of America estimates that as many as 5.1 million Americans may be living with Alzheimer's disease. Australian company Actinogen Medical says Alzheimer's is Australia's second biggest killer. According to a 2012 study commissioned by the Alzheimer's Society of Canada, 747,000 Canadians were living with cognitive impairment, which included, but was not limited to, dementia.

People with Alzheimer's



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Did you know?

Carbohydrates are seen as the enemy by many people looking to lose weight, but that reputation is ill-deserved for certain types of carbs. Carbohydrates referred to as "smart carbs" can boost energy and mood and help people, even dieters, maintain healthy weights. Smart carbs, which can be found in fruits, vegetables, minimally processed whole grain products such as brown rice and quinoa, and whole wheat bread among other foods, contain vital nutrients and fiber. The body takes longer to absorb whole grains than it does processed carbohydrates, stabilizing blood sugar and energy levels as a result. Because the body takes longer to absorb whole grains, feelings of satiety and fullness are extended. That reduces the likelihood of being hungry again shortly after eating, thereby helping people maintain healthy weights. Those who want to avoid carbohydrates should avoid products made with white flour, such as white bread, non-whole grain pastas, potato chips, and breakfast cereals with high amounts of sugar.

The Best Medicine

disease and other types of dementia may experience a decline in mental function severe enough to reduce their ability to perform everyday activities. Some of the cognitive functions that may be impaired include memory, communication and language, ability to pay attention, reasoning and judgment, emotional control and social behavior.

There is no cure for Alzheimer's disease, nor is there an effective long-term way to prevent potential mental decline. However, that has not stopped scores of researchers and medical teams that continue to study the efficacy of different drugs and therapies. The following are some of the more promising options in the works.

Leukine

A safety trial on the drug Leukine already is underway at the Colorado University Anschutz Medical Campus.

"We found, so far, that Leukine is safe in people with Alzheimer's

There is no cure for Alzheimer's disease, nor is there an effective long-term way to prevent potential mental decline. However, that has not stopped scores of researchers and medical teams that continue to study the efficacy of different drugs and therapies.

disease," said Dr. Huntington Potter, the director of Alzheimer's research at the university. "That means it doesn't have the side effects that so many other Alzheimer's drugs have had, which are swelling in the brain

and bleeding into the brain."

Leukine has been successful in removing the plaque or amyloid along the outside of nerve cells in the brain of mice. Researchers do not know the exact mechanism for removal, but the drug is working and working quickly. Leukine also may be helping the brain repair itself. The Alzheimer's Association has donated \$1 million toward financing the costs of the next phase of this trial.

Insulin

Neurologists at Rush University Medical Center are testing a type of insulin that is inhaled through a nasal spray to see if it improves cognition and memory function in people with mild cognitive impairment.

"There is growing evidence that insulin carries out multiple functions in the brain and that poor regulation of insulin may contribute to the development of Alzheimer's disease," said Dr. Neelum Aggarwal, a neurologist at Rush and the lead investigator of the study.

The 18-month clinical trial will study the nasal spray versus a placebo in 275 adults between the ages of 55 and 85.

Xanamem

Australian researchers at Actinogen Medical have begun trials of a new drug called Xanamem. More than 170 patients with mild dementia in Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom will take part in the placebo-controlled 12-week trial. The medicine blocks the stress hormone cortisol in order to improve mental function for those with dementias. In 2015, an Edinburgh University study of mice showed reducing cortisol in the brain improved their memory and decreased the number of Alzheimer's-associated amyloid plaques in the brain.

Researchers continue to work as they seek a successful, long-term option for treating or preventing Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. **TBM**



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Dr. Reddy graduated from the University of Louisville where she also earned her medical degree and completed an ophthalmology residency. Dr. Reddy completed a retina fellowship at the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary in Boston and will join our practice in October.

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Did you know?

Running on a variety of surfaces instead of sticking to just one surface may help runners reduce their risk of injury. Officials with the USA Track and Field's Sports Medicine and Science Committee recommend that runners vary their runs so they run on pavement, trails and tracks. While it helps to run on various surfaces, researchers do not believe one particular surface is better than another.

In fact, while running on asphalt has long been assumed to increase injury risk because of the presumption that harder surfaces produce greater impact forces on the body, a 2008 study from researchers at the Hannover Medical School Department of Plastic, Hand and Reconstructive Surgery in Germany found that running on asphalt surfaces decreased mid-portion tendinopathy risk while running on sand surfaces increased that risk tenfold.





Heart health advice for women

Heat disease may be something most commonly associated with men, but it can be deadly for women as well. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, heart disease is to blame for one in every four female deaths in the United States.

Recognizing the threat that heart disease poses is a great first step for women who want to avoid becoming one of the hundreds of thousands of

women who lose their lives to heart disease each year. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration offers the following advice to women looking to prioritize their heart health.

Thanks to food labels, it's easier than ever for women to consume heart-healthy diets. When examining labels, look for foods that are low in sodium and sugar. When planning meals, avoid foods that are high in trans fats. In 2015, the FDA ruled that trans fats were not recognized as safe for use in human foods and gave manufacturers three years to remove them from their products. The Cleveland Clinic advises consumers to check

labels for partially hydrogenated oils, a hidden source of trans fats.

Certain conditions can increase a woman's risk for heart disease. While women may not be able to turn back the clocks and prevent these conditions from developing, they can take them for the serious threat they are and do their best to manage them. High blood pressure, diabetes and high cholesterol can increase a woman's risk for heart disease. Take medications as directed, monitor blood sugar levels if you have diabetes, and routinely have your blood pressure and cholesterol tested to ensure any pre-existing conditions are not

increasing your risk for heart disease.

The FDA notes that many physicians prescribe aspirin to lower patients' risk of heart disease, clot-related strokes and other problems related to cardiovascular disease. However, there are risks associated with long-term aspirin use that should be discussed with a physician. According to the FDA, bleeding in the stomach, bleeding in the brain, kidney failure and certain types of stroke are some of the potential side effects of long-term aspirin use. Such side effects may never appear, but the risk that they might makes discussing the pros and cons of aspirin well worth it. **TBM**



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When to let go

How to give the best love and care to elderly pets

by **Nancy Thompson**
LIFE Staff

We take them into our homes and our hearts, care for them and love them. And when our pets become old, we worry about them and want to give them the special care they need and deserve.

What should we look for, and how do we help? And, eventually, how can we know when it's time to let them go?

"With older pets, it's the same as with older people," said Stewart "Chip" Beckett, a veterinarian and the owner of Beckett and Associates Veterinary Services in Glastonbury.

"They may not have the ability they used to have, but that doesn't mean they aren't valuable members of the family."

He said there's no doubt about the value of the bond between humans and their pets, citing animals who help people with post-traumatic stress disorder, autism and other special needs. "It's a two-way street," he said.

"The relationship may evolve, but it's still a good relationship."

The important issue is how the relationship might be changing. "Animals tell us when they're not enjoying life any more, just like people do," he said. "Are they interested in getting up and seeing us? Are they happy? If they're basically happy, that's great. A lot can be done with management to make old age better."

For example, he said putting rosin on the feet of dogs with spinal arthritis makes their paws sticky and helps with mobility issues. Monitoring an older pet's dental health also is important.

"Dentistry is important," he said. "Abscessed teeth can release bacteria into the bloodstream, and dental disease is the root of a lot of kidney problems. It's an area where people can help."

Better nutrition, an increased awareness of the dangers of letting pets roam outside, and better control of fleas and other parasites have extended the average life span of many pets.

"We have senior diets with less protein and higher fiber, good-quality

food with antioxidants and vitamins. We have glucosamine and other medications that offer the same benefits as they do for people. Dogs are living longer," Beckett said.

"When I started in practice, 10 years was a normal life span. Now they're living to 13 or 14 years."

Even with healthier food and better medication, at some point older pets will start to decline. Sometimes that's caused by mobility issues, kidney or heart disease, or other quality of life issues.

"Sometimes there are situations," he said. "A 15- or 20-pound dog is easier to pick up and carry than a 50-pound dog. Sometimes pet owners get to a point when they can't physically or emotionally do it. Some people just can't deal with it."

Others try everything they can to extend their pet's life.

"People's view of death and dying differ," Beckett said. "If you want to spend \$30,000 on chemo, surgery and radiation, I can do that, but not if you want to spend \$300. People have to ask what their budget is and have a clear

idea of what to do."

He said people dealing with a pet with a chronic disease often get in further than they had anticipated.

"Often they try one more thing, then two weeks into it they're doing things they never thought they'd want to do. The vet's job is to tell you what's available, but I can't make the decision for you."

It's a tough decision to end a pet's life, and not one to be taken lightly. "When it's time, make sure everyone's on the same page," he said. "Remember that after we put them down, we can't make them come back."

Kristin K. Haviar, known as "Dr. K" to her clients at the Animal Hospital of Rocky Hill, said it's important for pet owners to look for changes in their aging pets' thirst, eating habits and behavior. She said increased thirst could be a sign of diabetes or kidney disease and recommended calling a vet and having blood work done. Appetite changes could be a sign of hormone imbalance and also could call for blood work.

A decrease in thirst or appetite

Pets and Vets

also can be significant.

"With older pets we see changes at different times of year for no apparent reason," she said. "We see cats, especially older cats, who are constipated. Sometimes they're just not feeling well. Some have diarrhea, others get dehydrated."

She said a decrease in appetite can be a symptom of a variety of issues, including kidney or liver disease and cancer. Haviar said dogs and cats often react differently to not feeling well.

"Cats are quiet," she said. "They sometimes act OK until the problem is severe. Dogs usually let you know."

Haviar said cats tend to get an overactive thyroid that makes them eat a lot of food while losing weight, while dogs, especially bigger dogs, often have an underactive thyroid and put on weight.

Dogs and cats should be checked out by their vet more often as they get older. "The most important thing is to have them seen more often, usually every six months, with blood work at least once a year," she said. Pet owners

also should notice issues such as lameness, which might or might not be a symptom of a serious problem.

"Lameness for a day or two might be a soft tissue problem or achy joints, but if it lasts more than a couple of days or is severe it needs to be checked out."

Like people, older pets may experience cognitive issues.

"We're seeing pets live a lot longer," Haviar said. "Some experience cognitive dysfunction. They're awake at night, they become more vocal, and you see them staring into space, but there are supplements to help with that."

For Jacoba Nassar, a veterinarian at the Roaring Brook Veterinary Hospital in Canton, a pet's quality of life depends on a variety of issues, including comfort, its appetite, whether a pet is enjoying its normal routine and whether a pet is having more bad days than good days.

While not something to be taken lightly, she said she believes that euthanasia should be seen as a way for someone to take responsibility for their pet's dignified passing.

"That's the way it should be perceived," she said. "It's a nice option, sort of the next step for treatment, the final treatment. Some say they waited too long. It's so personal," she said of the decision to end a pet's life. "It can't be well defined. It's not just one issue."

Barb Guse, a member of the staff at Veterinary Specialists of CT in West Hartford, is one of a small number of licensed physical therapists in the state who is certified as a canine rehabilitation practitioner and has a different perspective on the aging process in dogs.

"Old age is not a disease," she said. "You can't just say, 'Oh, he's just getting old.' It's important to check with a vet to see if the problem is something that needs to be treated."

She said that, while older dogs may lose strength and flexibility and be unable to do some of the activities they used to do, they can adapt to new routines.

"The owner shouldn't expect them to do the longer walks," she said. "Dogs require daily low-impact exercise, shorter walks, done more often. The

owner needs to accept that the dog is aging. Even if they want to do long walks, they shouldn't because they could get hurt. You don't want to ask an older dog to jump into and out of a car or go up and down stairs. It's a safety issue, and it erodes their confidence, big time."

She said owners of older dogs with mobility issues should consider devices such as ramps and steps so their dogs will be confident. "If stairs are an issue, you'll need carpet and have the stairs well lit. Keep their nails trimmed, and if their paws get dry and cracked you can lubricate their pads, which will help them with traction. Keeping their confidence level up will encourage them to stay active."

Guse said that what she does at the clinic is very similar to what physical therapists do with humans, including exercises, treatments with heat and cold, and a water treadmill.

"There are all kinds of things that can be done, and they do so well," she said. They're just the best patients, and it's pretty amazing what we can do for the old guys." **TBM**

Did you know?

Outdoor exercise can benefit both the planet and the people doing the exercising. By exercising outdoors instead of at home or at indoor fitness centers, men and women can reduce their carbon footprints. Exercising in the great outdoors does not require the use of energy-consuming fitness machines.

In addition, when exercising outdoors during daylight hours, nature provides all the light men and women will need for their workouts, further reducing the average person's energy consumption. And it's not just adults who can benefit from spending more time outdoors.

According to the Harvard Medical School, children are likely to get more exercise if they spend time outdoors than they are if they spend time indoors. A study from researchers in England used GPS devices and accelerometers to track the activity of 1,000 children.

The children were more than twice as active when they were outside than they were when they were inside. When children spend ample time outdoors, that, too, can benefit the environment.

According to the National Institutes of Health, the average youngster spends three hours per day watching television and gets as much as seven hours of screen time each day. When kids are outdoors, they are less likely to be staring at energy-consuming screens and devices than they are when they're indoors.



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How to protect your pets from extreme heat

Extrême heat can be unpleasant for anyone, and pets are no exception. While it's easy for men and women to detect if their bodies are responding negatively to heat, those warning signs may not be so prevalent in pets, who may suffer in silence as the mercury continues to rise.

Pet owners must pay special attention to their pets on hot days, which the Humane Society of the United States notes can be both uncomfortable and dangerous for pets. In an effort to help pet owners protect their pets from the summer heat, the HSUS offers the following tips to pet owners who want to keep their pets cool and safe this summer.

• **Don't leave pets in a parked car.**

The temperature inside a vehicle can quickly approach dangerous levels on hot days, so pet owners should never leave their pets in parked cars, even if they leave the air conditioning on and

the engine running.

The HSUS notes that on an 85-degree day, temperatures inside cars with slightly cracked windows can reach 102 degrees in as little as 10 minutes. Rather than taking pets with you on car trips, leave them at home inside a comfortably air conditioned room where they won't be vulnerable to rising temperatures.

• **Change pet's exercise regimen.**

Pet owners who make sure their pets get daily exercise should change such routines when temperatures are on the rise. Midday walks or jogs should be switched to evenings or early mornings, when temperatures tend to be at their most moderate.

In addition, cut back on the time spent exercising, as pets may have trouble breathing on hot days.

When taking your dog for a jog or a run in the summertime, do so on the grass, avoiding asphalt, as hot asphalt can do significant damage to your pet's paws.

• **Be mindful of your breed.** Dog owners should recognize that certain dogs can handle the heat better than others. Short-nosed breeds have a harder time in extreme heat because their shorter airways don't allow as much time for the air they breathe in to cool as dogs with longer noses. In addition, the HSUS points out that dogs with white-colored ears are more susceptible to skin cancer than other dogs, making it imperative that owners of such dogs reduce their exposure to the sun on hot days when the UV index is especially dangerous.

• **Let dogs inside.** Doghouses might not be as prevalent as they once were, but many owners still keep doghouses in their backyards so their four-legged friends have a place to relax outdoors on lazy afternoons.

But doghouses can be similar to parked cars on especially hot days, making rising temperatures feel even hotter. Let dogs hang out inside in an air conditioned room on hot days to

reduce their risk of heatstroke.

• **Learn to recognize the signs of heatstroke.** Pets suffering from heatstroke will exhibit certain symptoms, and pet owners who learn to recognize those symptoms can do something about them before it's too late.

Heavy panting, glazed eyes, rapid heartbeat, difficulty breathing, excessive thirst, and lack of coordination are just a few potential indicators that a pet is suffering from heatstroke.

Animals that are very old, very young, overweight, and unaccustomed to prolonged exercise, as well as those who have heart or respiratory conditions, are especially susceptible to heatstroke. Learn more about pets and heatstroke at www.humanesociety.org.

Extreme heat can be dangerous to pets, who often suffer in silence when dealing with the consequences of extreme heat. Pet owners who take certain precautions and learn to recognize signs of a pet struggling with heat can better protect their animals. **TBM**



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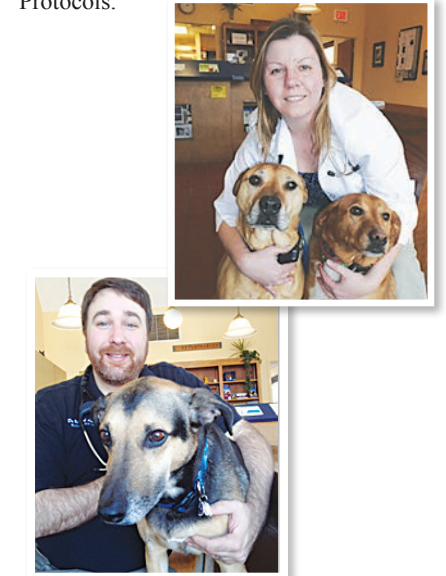
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Veterinary Acupuncturist and practices conventional medicine as well as Traditional Chinese Veterinary Medicine (TCVM) and Dr. Monica is an American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP) member and spear heads our Cat Friendly Practice Protocols.



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Editorial

Can we have civil discourse in politics?

Much has been written and said the past few weeks about the terrible shooting incident at an Alexandria, Va., baseball field that left U.S. Rep. Steve Scalise, a Republican from Louisiana and the House majority whip, seriously wounded.

Politicians on both sides of the aisle immediately spoke of the need to tone down the rhetoric and inject some civility in our political debates even as we passionately debate the issues. We've gone too far, they all said. Something has got to be done.

The reason we've gone too far is because too many Americans react emotionally rather than intellectually to political debate. Of course, that's exactly what the politicians want us to do. They don't want us to think, to weigh the arguments made by both sides, because we might end up opposing them.

It's all about winning so we certainly can't allow that to happen, now can we?

Better that we rant and rave and vilify anyone who disagrees with us. Our side is right and theirs is wrong, it's as simple as that. We shut our ears to anything but reinforcement of our preconceived positions and tune our televisions and radios to stations and programs that support our views.

They don't call it "rant radio" for nothing. And how about all of those mind-numbing politi-

cal discussion shows on 24-hour cable news channels?

All they do is repeat the same political nonsense ad nauseam and then have a panel of alleged experts tell us that either the liberal or conservative position is the correct one, depending on the channel or station.

God forbid they actually go out and cover the rest of the news. It's much more fun to talk politics and get people all riled up.

When U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords of Arizona was shot in a similar public incident six years ago, Democrats and Republicans alike sprinted to the nearest cameras and microphones on Capitol Hill to proclaim their horror.

They called for more civility in our political debate, less vitriolic rhetoric, a coming together of both parties in a sense of friendship and respect. Something had to be done to make things better.

That lasted a couple of weeks. Then they returned to their old divisive, hot-tempered, insulting and stiff-necked ways. They can't help themselves. It's the only way they know to engage the American people in the debate.

It would be nice if something good came out of this second shooting of a member of Congress in six years. But it won't. Because that would require all of us to listen to opposing viewpoints, engage our brains, and show a little respect to the other side of the debate. **RHL**

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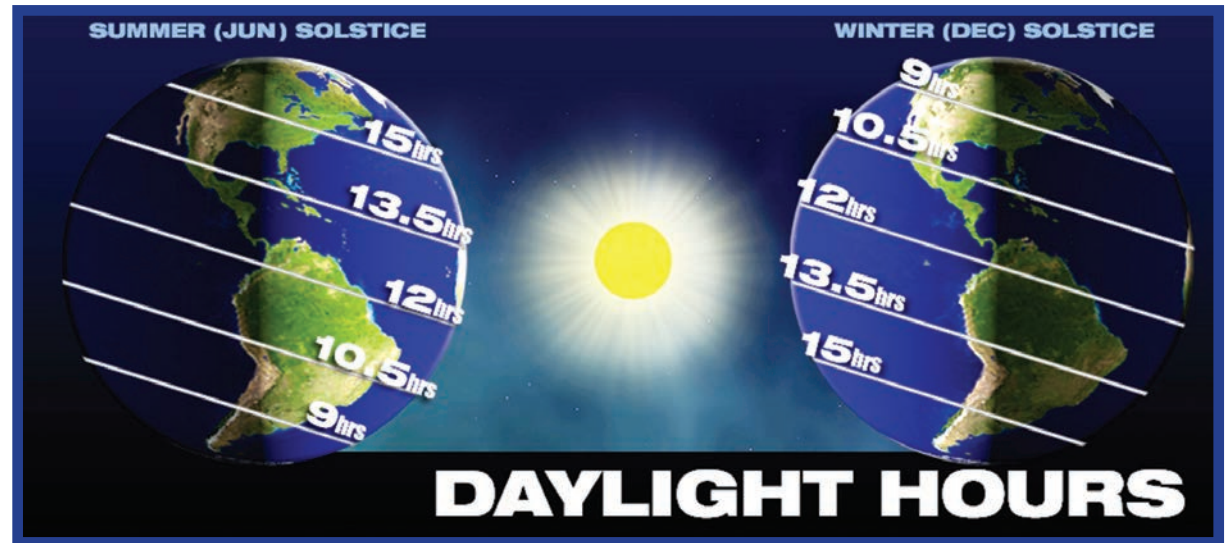
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BY MARK DIXON
WFSB METEOROLOGIST [AMS]



Savor/Enjoy the Daylight

First, let me just say that I hope everyone reading this article is having a great summer! Speaking of “summer” ...while the “meteorological” season started on June 1st, the “astronomical” season officially kicked off on June 21st (with the solstice). On this date, there is the greatest amount of pos-

sible daylight of the year, 15 hours and 14 minutes to be exact.

On a bright day here in Connecticut during the summer-time, many like to get out and enjoy the sunshine – if it’s heading to area beaches, a local pool, or a golf course (etc). So, you’ll certainly want to savor each and every min-

ute, since every day past the solstice, as we head toward autumn (and later winter), we lose daylight. But how much?

In this month alone, the loss of daylight is 45 minutes! On July 1st, the sunrise is at 5:19 a.m. and then sets at 8:30 p.m. By the end of the month, the sunrise shifts to 5:44 a.m. and then sets

20 minutes earlier, at 8:10 p.m.

So while this article may offer up somewhat depressing news, get out there and have fun ...as we head toward the Autumnal Equinox (on September 22nd), we will lose another 2 hours and 17 minutes. By the winter solstice, our total possible daylight dwindles to 9 hours and 7 minutes! **RHL**



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